

**SKELMERSDALE & HOLLAND URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**Annual Report**  
**on the**  
**Health of the District**  
**During the Year 1969**



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**BY**

**J. GORDON HAILWOOD, M.D., D.P.H.**

Medical Officer of Health



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## **SKELMERSDALE & HOLLAND URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Chairman of the Council :**

Councillor A. R. LYON.

**Vice-Chairman of the Council :**

Councillor T. L. BAXTER.

**Members of the Council :**

Councillors :

G. C. Bamforth, J.P.

J. Cadwell.

A. D. Hardisty.

J. R. Macauley, B.Sc.

J. R. McCann.

H. T. M. Swire, F.Inst.B.

W. Birch, D.F.M.

J. D. Carrington.

L. J. Kedward

P. Martland.

T. McCracken.

G. A. S. Brown

P. Edwards.

J. J. Kinsella.

C. R. Matthews.

R. L. Nuttall.

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### **SOCIAL WELFARE COMMITTEE**

**Chairman :**

Councillor P. EDWARDS.

**Vice-Chairman :**

Councillor L. J. KEDWARD.

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### **PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF**

**Medical Officer of Health :**

J. G. HAILWOOD, M.D., Ch.B., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

(Part-time)

**Deputy Medical Officer of Health :**

J. D. DIAMOND, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

(Part-time)

**Chief Public Health Officer :**

P. GLADWIN, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I., M.R.I.P.H.H.

**Additional Public Health Inspector :**

L. LANCASTER, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

**Trainee Assistant Public Health Inspector :**

J. I. YATES.

**Clerk/Shorthand-Typist :**

Miss J. J. BIRCHALL.





To : The Chairman and Members of the Social Welfare Committee.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the second Annual Report on the Health of the Urban District of Skelmersdale and Holland.

The health of the district remained good throughout the year, although 182 cases of infectious diseases were notified, of which 108 were cases of measles. 26 were cases of infective hepatitis, which has only become notifiable under recent regulations, and is now seen to be widespread and to occur spasmodically throughout the area. It is hoped that information obtained from the investigations of these cases will help to determine the cause and methods of preventing the illness.

The birth rate was 18.2 per 1,000 population, compared with 19.7 in 1968 and with 16.3 for England and Wales.

The death rate was 17.2 per 1,000 population compared with 12.9 for 1968 and 11.9 for England and Wales. The infant mortality rate was 22 per 1,000 live births, a welcome reduction on the figure of 29 in 1968, but still above the rate of 18 for the whole of England and Wales.

Housing conditions are improving and the face of Skelmersdale and Up Holland continues to change. Of course, the major number of houses are now built by the Development Corporation—1,575 out of the total 1,579 that were built during the year. The first street to be treated as an Improvement Area was completed during the year and attracted much interest and comment. A considerable number of further houses were scheduled as Improvement Area some years ago but progress is very slow. I fear that unless these improvements make more progress in the near future, some of the properties may have to be considered for demolition.

The work of the department continues to increase with the rapid enlargement of the New Town, and although the staff of Public Health Inspectors has been increased, they can barely keep abreast of the work, which new legislation is constantly thrusting on the department.

Finally, I would thank the Chairman and members of the Committee for the interest and support during the year and the members of the staff for their ready help and co-operation at all times.

I am your obedient servant,

J. G. HAILWOOD,

Medical Officer of Health.

## GENERAL STATISTICS

Area of District .....	7,537 acres
Population—Register General's mid-year estimate 1969	23,640
Total number of habitable dwellings .....	8,645
Rateable value .....	£915,687
Product of a penny rate .....	£3,532

The District embraces the designated area of Skelmersdale New Town, and with the increasing build-up here the character of this area has changed to residential and industrial although the remainder of the District remains predominantly agricultural in character.

## VITAL STATISTICS

	Male	Female	TOTAL	Rate
Live Births :				
Legitimate .....	248	242	490	18.2
Illegitimate .....	11	13	24	per 1,000 population
Still Births :				
Legitimate .....	8	5	13	25
Illegitimate .....	—	—	—	per 1,000 births

Live Birth Rate (Crude) per 1,000 population — 21.7

Total Deaths .....	124	98	222	17.2
				per 1,000 population
Infant Deaths :				
Under 1 year of age				
Legitimate .....	8	3	11	22
				per 1,000 live births
Illegitimate .....	—	1	1	42
				per 1,000 live births
Under 4 weeks of age				
Legitimate .....	5	1	6	14
				per 1,000 live births
Illegitimate .....	—	1	1	
Under 1 week of age				
Legitimate .....	4	1	5	12
				per 1,000 live births
Illegitimate .....	—	1	1	

Death Rate (Crude) per 1,000 population — 9.4



## **NOTES ON VITAL STATISTICS**

### **Births**

There were 514 live births registered in the Urban District during the year, of which 259 were male and 255 were female; included in this figure are 24 illegitimate births. The adjusted birth rate per 1,000 population was 18.2 compared with 16.3 for England and Wales.

### **Deaths**

The total number of deaths registered in the Urban District during the year was 222, of which 124 were male and 98 were female, giving an adjusted death rate per 1,000 population of 17.2. The rate for the whole of England and Wales was 11.9.

### **Infant Mortality**

There were no deaths during the year due to Zymotic or Epidemic diseases. There were, however, 30 deaths of infants under one year, of which 6 died under one week. This gave an infant mortality rate of 23. The figure for England and Wales was 18.

### **Maternal Mortality**

No maternal deaths occurred in the district during the year.

Causes of Death	No. of deaths in 1968	No. of deaths in 1969
Enteritis and other Diarrhoea Diseases .....	—	1
Tuberculosis, Respiratory .....	—	2
Other Tuberculosis, including late effects .....	—	1
Other Infective and Parasitic Diseases .....	—	1
Malignant Neoplasm, Buccal Cavity, etc. ....	—	1
Malignant Neoplasm, Oesophagus .....	—	2
Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach .....	6	7
Malignant Neoplasm, Intestine .....	—	7
Malignant Neoplasm, Lung, Bronchus .....	6	8
Malignant Neoplasm, Breast .....	5	2
Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus .....	—	3
Malignant Neoplasm, Prostate .....	—	1
Other Malignant Neoplasms .....	18	8
Leukaemia Aleukaemia .....	1	—
Diabetes Mellitus .....	5	1
Other Endocrine, etc. Diseases .....	1	3
Anaemias .....	1	1
Chronic Rheumatic Heart Disease .....	0	3
Other Diseases of the Nervous System, etc.....	4	4
Coronary Disease, Angina .....	3	—
Hypertensive Disease .....	3	8
Ischaemic Heart Disease .....	38	41
Other forms of Heart Disease .....	12	10
Cerebrovascular Disease .....	24	32
Other Diseases of Circulatory System .....	6	6
Influenza .....	1	3
Pneumonia .....	5	14
Bronchitis and Emphysema .....	8	6
Asthma .....	—	1
Other Diseases of Respiratory System .....	5	6
Peptic Ulcer .....	2	2
Intestinal Obstruction and Hernia .....	—	1
Other Diseases of Digestive System .....	4	4
Nephritis and Nephrosis .....	—	1
Hyperplasia of Prostate .....	—	2
Other Diseases, Genito-Urinary System .....	3	2
Diseases of Skin, Subcutaneous Tissue .....	—	1
Diseases of Musculo-Skeletal System .....	1	1
Congenital Anomalies .....	5	4
Birth Injury, Difficult Labour, etc. ....	3	1
Other causes of Perinatal Mortality .....	3	3
Symptoms and ill defined conditions .....	1	3
Motor Vehicle Accidents .....	3	2
All Other Accidents .....	3	11
Suicide and Self-inflicted Injuries .....	2	1
TOTAL .....	182	222

# CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE NOTIFIED DURING THE YEAR 1969

Notifiable Diseases	Total Cases at all ages	0	1	2	3	4	5	10	15	25	45	65 and over	Age unknown
Measles	108	11	17	15	19	11	34	—	1	—	—	—	—
Dysentery	4	1	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	—
Scarlet Fever	29	1	—	3	6	2	13	4	—	—	—	—	—
Acute Meningitis	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Whooping Cough	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Infective Hepatitis	26	—	—	1	1	5	9	4	2	4	—	—	—
Food Poisoning	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	1
Tuberculosis	10	—	—	1	1	—	1	1	—	3	3	—	—
TOTAL	182	13	18	21	28	18	58	10	4	7	3	1	1

## **GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA**

### **Laboratory Arrangements**

Bacteriological examinations are carried out by the Pathological Department of the Wigan Royal Infirmary, Ormskirk Hospital and the Public Health Laboratories at Preston. These arrangements are satisfactory. A report on every examination is made to the Public Health Department.

The County Analyst at Preston carries out analyses of samples when requested.

### **Ambulance Arrangements**

Ambulance services are provided by the County Council under the National Health Service Act, 1966.

### **National Assistance Act, 1948**

No action was taken under section 47 of this Act during the year 1969 by the Authority.

### **Water Supply**

Water is supplied by the Makerfield Water Board and the West Lancashire Water Board. The supply was satisfactory as regards quality and quantity. During the year samples were submitted for bacteriological examination.

### **Food Poisoning**

Three cases of food poisoning (*salmonella virchow*) were notified during the year.

### **Liquid Egg (Pasteurisation) Regulations, 1963**

There are no egg pasteurisation plants in the district, and no samples of liquid egg were submitted to the Alpha-Amylase test.



## HOUSING STATISTICS

### 1. Number of new dwellings erected during the year

Traditional permanent houses :

	Houses	Flats
(i) By Local Authority .....	—	4
(ii) By other Local Authorities .....	—	—
(iii) By other bodies or persons .....	( 1,575 )	

### 2. Total number of dwellings existing in district at end of year owned by Local Authority : 1,448.

### 3. Inspections of dwelling houses during the year

A.	(i) Total number of dwelling houses inspected formally or informally for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) .....	240
	(ii) Number of inspections, formal or informal, made for the purpose .....	580
	(iii) Number of dwelling houses in (i) above found to be not in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation but capable of being rendered fit .....	27
B.	Total number of dwelling houses existing at end of year which were unfit for human habitation and not capable of being rendered fit, in respect of which :	
	(i) Demolition, Clearance or Closing Orders have been made (at any time) .....	47
	(ii) Demolition, Clearance or Closing Orders have not yet been made .....	30

### 4. Houses Demolished

In or adjoining clearance areas :

	Number Demolished	Displaced during year	
		Persons	Families
(1) Houses unfit for human habitation	—	—	—
(2) Houses included by reason of bad arrangement, etc.	—	—	—
(3) Houses on land acquired under section 43 (2) Housing Act 1957	—	—	—

Not in or adjoining clearance areas :

	Number Demolished	Displaced during year	
		Persons	Families
(4) As a result of formal or informal procedure under section 16 or 17 (1) Housing Act, 1957	6	10	3
(5) Local Authority owned houses certified unfit by the Medical Officer of Health	—	—	—
(6) Houses unfit for human habitation where action has been taken under local Acts.	—	—	—
(7) Unfit houses included in unfitness orders	—	—	—

## 5. Unfit Houses Closed

(1) Under Section 16 (4), 17 (1) and 35 (1), Housing Act, 1957, and Section 26 Housing Act, 1961.	3	12	4
(2) Under Section 17 (3) and 26, Housing Act, 1957	—	—	—
(3) Parts of Buildings closed under Section 18, Housing Act, 1957	—	—	—

## 6. Unfit houses made fit and houses in which defects were remedied.

	By Owner	By Local Authority
(1) After informal action by Local Authority	27	—
(2) After formal notice under :		
(a) Public Health Acts	6	—
(b) Sections 9 and 16, Housing Act, 1957	—	
(3) Under Section 24, Housing Act, 1957	—	
(4) After modification or revocation of a Clearance Order under Section 24 of the Housing Act, 1957	—	—
(5) After determination of a demolition order under Section 24 of the Housing Act, 1957	—	—



## 7. Unfit houses in Temporary use (Housing Act, 1957)

	Number of Houses	Number of Separate Dwellings
Position at end of year :		
(1) Retained for temporary accommodation :		
(a) Under Section 48	—	—
(b) Under Section 17(2)	—	—
(c) Under Section 46	—	—
(2) Licensed for temporary occupation under Sections 34 or 53	—	—

## 8. Purchase of Houses by Agreement

	(1) No. of Houses	(2) No. of occupants in houses in column (1)
Houses in clearance areas other than those included in confirmed Clearance Orders or Compulsory Purchase Orders	—	—

## 9. Housing Act, 1949 and Housing (Financial Provisions Act, 1958

	No. of dwelling houses or other buildings affected		
	Owner/ Occupiers	Others	Local Authority
<b>IMPROVEMENT GRANTS, ETC.</b>			
Action during year :			
(a) Submitted by private individuals to Local Authority	7	5	—
(b) Approved by Local Authority	7	4	—
(c) Submitted by Local Authority to Ministry	—	—	—
(d) Finally approved by Ministry	—	—	30
(e) Work completed	4	5	5
(f) Additional separate dwellings included in (e)	—	—	—

## 10. House Purchase and Housing Act, 1959 — Standard Grants

	No. of dwelling houses or other buildings affected
Action during year :	
(a) Applications submitted to Local Authority for improvement to :	
(i) full standard	7
(ii) reduced standard	—
(b) Total applications approved by Local Authority for improvement to :	
(i) full standard	7
(ii) reduced standard	—
(c) Work completed	14

# REPORT OF THE CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER

## FOOD HYGIENE

It was found necessary to prosecute the occupier of one food business under section 8 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, for selling food intended for, but unfit for, human consumption. The prosecution was successful.

Ten other cases involving the sale of unsound food, or food containing foreign bodies, were dealt with by the department during the year.

### FOOD PREMISES

Butchers .....	10
Bakers .....	4
Grocers and General Stores .....	39
Greengrocers .....	4
Fishmongers .....	2
Fishfryers .....	7
Licensed Houses, Clubs, Canteens .....	63
Sugar Confectionery, Minerals, etc .....	12

### REGISTERED PREMISES

For the storage and sale of ice cream .....	36
For fish frying .....	7
For sausage manufacturing and preparation of meats .....	32

### MEAT INSPECTION

No meat inspection is carried out, there being no abattoir in the district.

### FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1955 — SAMPLING

A total of sixty-six samples were obtained by the Lancashire County Council, comprising forty milks (of which five were Channel Islands milk) and twenty-six others as follows :

1 Bread	1 Chocolate novelties
1 Chocolate covered rolls	1 Faggots in gravy, frozen
1 Tonic liquid	1 Beefburgers
1 Cream of Tartar	1 Black puddings
1 Sponge pudding, canned	1 Apple pie
1 Christmas pudding	1 Antacid digestant
1 Salted peanuts	1 Apple sponge pudding
1 Ground almonds	1 Indian Brandee
1 Trifle mix	1 Malt, milk cocoa beverage
1 Baby food	1 Baby food (vegetable and turkey)
1 Health salts	1 Baby food (strained beef broth)
1 Mincemeat pies	1 Lemon and lime drink
1 Skinless boned chicken canned	1 Meat and potato pies



After submission for examination to the County Analyst, all the above samples were reported to be genuine.

**ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION CONTROL**

The Skelmersdale and Holland Urban District Council (nos. 4 and 5) Smoke Control Orders came into operation on 1st October, 1969.

Towards the end of the year nos. 6 and 7 Orders, on the preparation of which much time had been spent, were held up because of the shortage of solid smokeless fuels. Although we were by no means the only local authority affected, this enforced pause in the work of clearing up the atmosphere was nonetheless to be regretted not only because of the lack of progress in conversions to smokeless fuel, but also because of the loosening of control over existing smoke control areas which resulted.

The proposed no. 6 area would alone have covered 2,300 houses and would have made an appreciable contribution to the quality of the environment in this New Town district, one of the attractions of which is the comparative cleanliness of the air. The New Town development, both industrial and domestic, is smokeless, and is strictly controlled. It is therefore particularly important that the older parts of the district are able to make their contribution towards the ultimate aim of a completely smoke-free town.

The Council have agreed to the recommendation that the no. 6 area be increased in size when smoke control is allowed to be resumed, so that our programme shall ultimately be as scheduled, although this will impose an extra workload on the staff.

**SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL**

All houses in the district, with the exception of a few outlying ones, are now served by public sewers.

**REFUSE COLLECTION**

This is carried out by the Engineer and Surveyor's Department. Disposal is by controlled tipping.

**OFFICES, SHOPS AND RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963**

The following contraventions of the Act were discovered during the year 1969 :

Failure to provide thermometer .....	2
Failure to post Abstract of the Act .....	1
No proper first aid equipment .....	2
Inadequate lighting .....	1
Unsuitable sanitary conveniences .....	1
Inadequate washing facilities, etc. ....	4
Inadequate clothing accommodation .....	2
Inadequate heating .....	1
Notices complied with during year .....	2

**THE OFFICES, SHOPS AND RALWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963**  
**REGISTRATION AND GENERAL INSPECTION**

A.

Classes of Premises	Total number of premises registered at end of the year	Number of registered premises receiving a general inspection during the year
Offices	25	5
Retail Shops	67	33
Wholesale shops, warehouses	—	—
Catering establishments open to the public, canteens	21	5

B. Number of visits of all kinds by inspectors to registered premises : 137.

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**ANALYSIS OF PERSONS EMPLOYED IN REGISTERED PREMISES BY WORKPLACE**

C.

Class or Workplace	Number of Persons employed
Offices	342
Retail Shops	208
Wholesale departments, warehouses	—
Catering establishments open to the public	87
TOTAL .....	637
Total males .....	306
Total females .....	331

D. No. of Inspectors appointed under Section 52 (1) or (5) of the Act : 2.



## **OFFICES, SHOPS AND RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963**

Once again no accidents were reported, and I find it difficult to believe that the workers in these premises, including those in butchers shops and canteens, never have accidents. It is interesting that the chief public health inspector of another new town authority, with a population twice that of this district, made a point in the annual report for that district that he felt that all reportable accidents were not in fact reported, only 39 accidents having been notified. At that rate if we had been notified of 19 accidents we should have been suspicious that not all had been notified. We have had NONE reported.

I would remind occupiers of premises to which the Act applies that all accidents causing inability to carry out normal work for three days or more must by law be reported to the local authority.

## **HOUSE IMPROVEMENT**

In the Skelmersdale Improvement Area interest on the part of occupiers still increases, and improvements to three more streets were commenced during the year. A policy switch was necessary because of the weight of public opinion, which forced a change in emphasis from phased, one street at a time improvement, towards a policy of allowing owners to improve out of phase, subject to the controls necessary to ensure that aesthetic, public health, and planning principles were adhered to. The keenness of people in the area to improve resulted in this change, so that we now have a number of builders each improving single houses, or a few adjacent houses, in three streets. This method produces far more management problems than a phased programme, but we believe that it will also produce improvement at a speedier rate than hitherto.

The involvement of private individuals, and of private capital, rather than large local authority expenditure, has been a keynote of the scheme from its inception. This policy, originated by the Civic Trust and Skelmersdale Urban District Council has now been vindicated, as is seen by the way in which people are anxious to proceed themselves with improvements, despite rising costs. The Housing Act, 1969, has resulted in the average grant rising from just under £400 to about £800, which more than offsets the cost increase.

During the year we had agreement to proceed in respect of the first landlord-owned property, which was very gratifying. I feel that the success or otherwise of the 1969 Act as applied to improvement areas will rest in whether its provisions are considered sufficiently attractive by landlords for them to voluntarily improve sub-standard property.

The rate of progress in the improvement area depends almost wholly upon the number of transit houses available, and we must acquire more as a matter of urgency if the impetus recently given to the programme is to be maintained.

**PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949**

- 1. Number of rodent operatives employed :
  - (a) Full-time : One.
  - (b) Part-time : One.
- 2. Action taken relating to rodent control during the year ended 31st December, 1969 :

	Type of Property	
	Non-Agricultural Dwelling Houses	Agricultural
No. of properties in district	8,580	65
No. of properties inspected after notification	273	9
No. infested by :	(i) rats	5
	(ii) mice	4
Total No. of properties inspected for rats or mice other than notification	60	12
No. infested by :	(i) rats	—
	(ii) mice	—

Contracts for the control of rats and mice by the Local Authority have been signed by a number of local firms.



## FACTORIES ACT, 1961

1. Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Public Health Inspectors).

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
I. Factories in which section 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authority	—	—	—	—
II. Factories not included in (I) in which section 7 is enforced by Local Authority	75	30	5	—
III. Other premises in which section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers premises)	—	—	—	—
TOTAL .....	75	30	5	—

2. Cases in which defects were found.

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred :		
			to H.M. Inspector	by H.M. Inspector	
Want of Cleanliness (S.1)	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S.2)	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary conveniences (S.7)	—	—	—	—	—
(a) Insufficient	1	1	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Out-Work)	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL .....	1	1	—	—	—



